Increase in strength of Supreme Court Judges

2859. SHRI M.V. MYSURA REDDY: Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Cabinet has recently taken a decision to increase the strength of Supreme Court Judges from the existing 26 to 31;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) to what extent the increase in strength would help in reducing the number of cases;

(d) whether the Cabinet has also considered the proposal to set up Supreme Court benches, at least, one each in Northern, Southern, Eastern and Western India; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI H.R. BHARDWAJ): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. It is proposed to increase the number of Judges in Supreme Court from the present 25 to 30, excluding the Chief Justice of India.

(c) The augmentation of the strength of Judges in Supreme Court will help the Chief Justice to set up more Benches with a view to function more efficiently and effectively towards attaining the ultimate goal of rendering speedy justice to the litigant public.

(d) and (e) Successive Chief Justices of India have not favoured setting up of Benches of Supreme Court outside Delhi. As such, there is no proposal before the Government for setting up of Benches of Supreme Court in any part of the country.

Pending cases in Karnataka High Court

2860. SHRI RAJEEV CHANDRASEKHAR: Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

(a) the number of pending cases in the Karnataka High Court, as on 31st December, 2007;

(b) the number out of them which are (i) over 15 years old, (ii) less than 15 yea·s but more than 10 years old, (iii) less than 10 years but more than 5 years old and (iv) the date since when the oldest case is pending; and

(c) the steps proposed to be taken to expedite disposal of the pending cases, particularly those pending for over ten years?

THE MINISTER OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI H.R. BHARDWAJ): (a) As per available information, a total of 105856 cases (89753 civil and 16103 criminal cases) were pending in the Karnataka High Court as on 31st December, 2007.

(b) and (c) Information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Recognition of foreign notaries

2861. SHRI SHANTARAM LAXMAN NAIK: Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

(a) whether there are certain reciprocal arrangements for recognition of notaries act done by foreign notaries; and